

Condominium Home Owners' Association

Serving BC's Strata Property Owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-212

Condo Smarts

Headline: Owners must pay for repairs

Topic: Repairs

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Dear Condo Smarts: Our strata council have been attempting for the past year to have the owners pass a special levy for \$850,000 to replace our hot and cold water piping in our building.

We are a 127 unit low rise, and in 2005 started experiencing leaks caused from the copper pipe deteriorating.

We have had to file over 5 insurance claims due to pipe failure floods since that time and our insurance deductible for water escape is now \$50,000.

The owners once again in December have turned down the resolution for the special levy.

If we don't get the repairs complete, our insurance company cannot guarantee that they can insure us any longer. How can we convince our owners to vote in favour of the resolution before it's too late?

- *Challnor Gardens Strata Council.*

Dear Council members: Many strata owners are terrified by the growing costs they are facing in aging buildings. Their first choice is simply to ignore the obvious and refuse to approve any type of repairs.

You are well beyond the "before it's too late" scenario as it will take years to reduce your insurance costs, and the cost of the re-piping is likely 15-30% higher since your first meeting.

There are several tactics that might help. First, canvass all those people who voted against the resolution and find out why? There may be a concern among the owners about the resolutions, lack of supervision in the project, unclear bidding process or cost controls that place them in opposition to the levy.

Second, with the assistance of a lawyer experienced in strata construction and procedures, convene a special general meeting of the owners to advise them of their legal obligations as a strata corporation to maintain and repair the common property and the repercussions of not repairing.

At the meeting it may be necessary to poll the vote. This way the strata will call the roll of voters and identify in the minutes how each strata lot has voted. This helps to reduce block proxy voting, and identifies in the minutes those in favour and against.

If the vote fails, those who vote in favour are likely going to court against those who opposed to get the project moving. Sadly what should have cost an average of \$6,692 per strata lot can easily exceed \$10,000 with delays and legal costs.

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